



CITY OF FALLS CHURCH

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Virginia Legislators Force City to Dismantle its Successful Red Light Camera Program

FALLS CHURCH, VA. – Richmond, Virginia lawmakers' decision to reject legislation allowing Virginia communities to continue using video cameras to identify and issue citations to red-light runners will force the City to discontinue using its four red light cameras currently installed at four of its highly trafficked areas on June 30, 2005.

Since installing its accident avoidance system in 2001, the City has recorded 75,503 red light runners; cited 58,833 violators; and collected fines from 48,881 violators.

The City vigorously worked to convince Richmond legislators of the red light cameras' ability to improve intersection safety through better enforcement demonstrating that its red light camera did more than just cite red light runners, but once the City's system detected a vehicle, it monitored its speed, acceleration, and deceleration to determine the probability of that vehicle stopping for the red light. If it was determined that the vehicle would not stop, the video camera is triggered and the red light violation is recorded and transmitted to the police department. The City's video photo red light system also had a unique feature where it predicts the red light violation and holds the traversing light for two seconds to help prevent serious injury to unsuspecting drivers.

Nevertheless, the City's red light camera program, along with red light camera programs located in six other Virginia jurisdictions, will no longer be able to reduce the number of crashes, which average almost 5,000 annually in Virginia. Nor will the City be able to aid in reducing motorist injuries caused by red light-running, which, according to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, occurred in 45 percent of the red light crashes studied, compared with 30 percent for other crash types.

Though the City's red light camera enforcement program will be discontinued, the City will continue to use its unique features that keeps the side street red so as to avoid side impact accidents, as well as utilizing the video-based camera system to conduct traffic studies that will ultimately aid in the improvement of traffic congestion in the City.

For more information about the dismantling of the City's red light camera program, contact 703-248-5003.

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